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UNHCR ACTIVITIES FINANCED BY VOLUNTARY FUNDS:
REPORT FOR 1994-1995 AND PROPOSED PROGRAMMES AND
BUDGET FOR 1996

PART V. SOUTH WEST ASIA, NORTH AFRICA
AND THE MIDDLE EAST

Section 12 - Other Countries in Western Asia

(submitted by the High Commissioner)

V 12. OTHER COUNTRIES IN WESTERN ASIA

1. This section covers the activities of UNHCR in Bahrain, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, the Syrian Arab Republic and the United Arab Emirates.

1. Beneficiary population

2. At 31 December 1994 there were 100,695 refugees in the region distributed in Jordan (580), Kuwait (30,020), Lebanon (11,459), Saudi Arabia (18,923), Syrian Arab Republic (40,290) and the United Arab Emirates (381). Most of the refugees receiving assistance through UNHCR are living in urban areas and some 25,000 are accommodated in camps.

2. Developments in 1994 and 1995

(a) Jordan

3. In Jordan, there are 269 Iraqi, 265 Bosnian and 46 other refugees, mainly from Sudan, Somalia and Sri Lanka. Of the 3,617 persons interviewed in 1994, 382 were recognized as refugees under the mandate of UNHCR.

(b) Kuwait

4. Of the 30,020 mostly Iraqi refugees in Kuwait, 2,730 are being assisted. UNHCR helped 90 Iraqis to repatriate and another 50 to resettle. In early 1995, over 80 Iraqis arrived in Kuwait, and those recognized as refugees received financial support and were processed for resettlement.

(c) Lebanon

5. The structure and activities of the UNHCR Liaison Office in Beirut will remain the same as in the past until durable solutions are found for the assisted caseload comprising mainly Somalis, Sudanese and, increasingly, Iraqis coming from neighbouring countries. Of 11,500 refugees in Lebanon, 909 received limited assistance while 300 received full assistance. In June 1994, the Government of Lebanon announced the issuance of civil registry certificates for 130,000 stateless persons who were thus proclaimed to be Lebanese citizens with full rights and obligations.

(d) Saudi Arabia

6. The resettlement of Iraqi refugees in Rafha Camp continued to be the main activity in Saudi Arabia. Of a total camp population of 24,025 at the beginning of 1994, 4,897 persons had been resettled by the end of the year. UNHCR also facilitated the voluntary return of 205 persons who had formally requested their return to their country of origin. Because of many physical and psychological pressures in Rafha Camp on women and children who constitute 9 and 29 per cent,

respectively, of the total camp population, the need to create a post for a social services counsellor became apparent. The entire infrastructure of Rafha Camp is provided by the Government.

(e) The Syrian Arab Republic

7. In the Syrian Arab Republic, UNHCR and the Ministry of State for Planning Affairs signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), regarding the role of UNHCR in assisting the Government with the refugees resulting from the Gulf War crisis. During 1994, 51 refugees repatriated voluntarily to various African countries, mainly Eritrea and Somalia, and 20 departed for resettlement. Of the 40,290 refugees in the Syrian Arab Republic, 4,459 are being assisted.

(f) The United Arab Emirates

8. A few needy refugees of various origins, but mainly Somalis and Iranians, received a one-time allowance or payment of their medical treatment costs. A small allocation is made for the school fees of Ugandan Asian refugee children. During 1994, 96 Somalis opted for repatriation and 18 were resettled. Of the 381 refugees in the United Arab Emirates, 26 are being assisted.

3. 1996 country programmes

(a) Objectives

9. Durable solutions will be sought on an individual basis for refugees of various origins, but mainly from Africa and the Middle East. While refugees who opt for repatriation will be assisted to do so, resettlement will be the durable solution that will be pursued for most of the others, particularly if they reside in countries where no formal policy of asylum exists.

(i) Iraqi refugees

10. It is anticipated that the outflow of Iraqi asylum-seekers will continue unabated. UNHCR will provide international protection, conduct interviews to determine eligibility for refugee status and endeavour to find durable solutions, mainly resettlement, for Iraqi asylum-seekers and for refugees who approach its offices in the region.

(ii) Somali refugees

11. Most of the 3,900 refugees are single men who were granted temporary refugee status, mostly in Kuwait and the Syrian Arab Republic. Subsistence allowances will continue to be provided for the neediest, as will health care, education and counselling. Repatriation assistance will also be available to them once their voluntary return becomes a possibility.

(iii) Other refugees

12. Although the major focus will be on activities aimed at ensuring the international protection of eligible cases, particularly those in detention for illegal border crossing or residence, care and maintenance will be provided on an individual basis until a durable solution is found.

(b) Proposed budgets for 1996

(i) Jordan

13. Since Jordan is not a party to international legal instruments relating to refugee status, the determination of refugee status and the identification of durable solutions for urban refugees will continue to be the major activities of the UNHCR Branch Office in Amman. Emphasis will be placed on the dissemination of refugee law, and on promoting activities to sensitize government officials, academic institutions and the media on refugee issues.

(ii) Lebanon

14. Assistance will be provided under a care and maintenance project for the same range of activities as in 1995. The number of beneficiaries is expected to increase slightly due to increasing difficulties encountered by persons whose legal status is still under consideration by competent authorities. A local settlement project will cover the basic needs of 80 refugee families and 80 individual refugees, including domestic items, subsistence allowance, health care, shelter and education grants. Legal aid will no longer be provided to former stateless persons since they have recently acquired Lebanese nationality.

(iii) The Syrian Arab Republic

15. Emphasis will be placed on finding durable solutions for the 3,200 cases who were registered in El-Hol Camp before the end of 1992. Resettlement opportunities will be pursued for those eligible under current resettlement criteria. Since the caseload is below 5,000 persons, UNHCR will provide food for the camp population in accordance with the UNHCR/WFP MOU. An allocation for the purchase of basic and supplementary food is proposed for 1996. Whenever feasible, urban refugees from African countries will be assisted to repatriate voluntarily.

(iv) The United Arab Emirates

16. It is foreseen that care and maintenance will be provided to some 120 refugees from Somalia, Ethiopia, the Islamic Republic of Iran and Afghanistan as well as for a small residual caseload of Ugandan Asians in need of household and medical support.

(c) Implementing partners

(i) Jordan

17. The Hashemite Charity Organization has been implementing a housing project for Bosnian refugees since February 1994. Given the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, this arrangement will probably continue throughout 1995 and in 1996.

(ii) Kuwait

18. Deserving cases are referred to Zakat House, a charitable organization, for assistance.

(iii) Lebanon

19. In Lebanon, the Middle East Council of Churches is UNHCR's main implementing partner and is entrusted with the responsibility of delivering assistance to refugees. NGO Forum, a non-governmental organization, is the implementing partner of UNHCR for providing legal assistance to stateless persons. All activities are coordinated by the UNHCR Liaison Office in Beirut.

(iv) The Syrian Arab Republic

20. The Syrian Women's Association has started to implement social and training projects for refugee women and children in El-Hol Camp. In cooperation with the Ministry of Agriculture, 70,000 trees were planted in and around the camp. UNHCR has implementing arrangements with the State Planning Commission, the Syrian Red Crescent Society and UNDP.

(d) Programme delivery and administrative support costs

(i) 1994 expenditure (all sources of funds)

(a) Jordan

21. The 1994 expenditures were higher than revised estimates, chiefly under salaries, because of an increase in asylum-seekers, mainly Iraqis. This increase required the employment of two Eligibility Assistants and one Registration Clerk under temporary assistance to process the requests. In addition, expenditure for office supplies and materials was also higher than expected.

(b) Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates

22. The 1994 expenditure was not significantly different from revised estimates, with expenditure being incurred primarily in Kuwait.

(c) Lebanon

23. The 1994 expenditure was not significantly different from revised estimates.

(d) Saudi Arabia

24. The 1994 expenditure was lower than revised estimates, mainly under common staff costs, since some posts remained vacant while several others were on short-term contracts during the year. Expenditures under general operating expenses were also lower than expected since the Government indirectly covered some administrative costs in 1994, including the rental of the Branch Office premises in Riyadh. One office vehicle was replaced.

(e) The Syrian Arab Republic

25. The 1994 expenditure was somewhat lower than expected since the newly created post of Protection Officer remained vacant for a short period. The relocation of the office premises was deferred to 1995, generating savings under general operating expenses. Expenditure under office supplies and materials was higher than expected due to increased needs for office vehicle fuel.

(ii) Revised 1995 requirements (all sources of funds)

(a) Jordan

26. The revised 1995 requirements are slightly higher than initial estimates, mainly under salaries and common staff costs, due to the creation of one post of Registration Clerk/Translator.

(b) Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates

27. The revised 1995 requirements are considerably higher, mainly due to the extension of posts in the Office of the Chief of Mission to deal with the refugee caseload. In addition, the office is moving to more suitable premises. Increases under other budget chapters relate mainly to new initiatives being undertaken in Public Sector Fund Raising activities.

(c) Lebanon

28. The revised 1995 requirements are higher than initial estimates mainly because of the creation of one Secretary post.

(d) Saudi Arabia

29. The overall revised 1995 requirements are lower than initial estimates, although there has been a move from Special Programmes to General Programmes. The creation of one Associate Community Social Services Officer post and one Driver post have been largely offset by the discontinuation of the post of Assistant Social Services Officer at the national level. General operating expenses have been reduced in anticipation of certain administrative costs continuing to be covered by the Government, including the rent for the Branch Office. This has enabled the launching of new initiatives in Public Sector Fund Raising activities.

(e) The Syrian Arab Republic

30. The revised 1995 requirements are higher than initial estimates, mainly because of costs for additional office space required to handle the increasing number of asylum-seekers. Other new needs relate to higher than expected costs for the replacement of office vehicles and the purchase of new furniture and equipment.

(iii) Initial 1996 requirements (all sources of funds)

(a) Jordan

31. The 1996 requirements are much the same as the revised 1995 requirements since no significant changes are foreseen in operations. Provision has been made for the replacement of the representational vehicle.

(b) Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates

32. The 1996 requirements are much the same as the revised 1995 requirements since no significant changes are foreseen in operations. All previously approved time-limited posts have been extended until 31 December 1996. Provision has been made for the replacement of one office vehicle. These Offices are supervised by the UNHCR Regional Office in Cairo.

(c) Lebanon

33. The 1996 requirements are slightly lower than the revised 1995 requirements and no significant changes are foreseen.

(d) Saudi Arabia

34. The 1996 requirements are slightly lower than the revised 1995 requirements and no significant changes are foreseen since durable solutions for the large number of Iraqi refugees have not been implemented. Concerning staff, all remaining time-limited posts have been extended until 31 December 1996. Provision has been made for the replacement of one office vehicle.

(e) The Syrian Arab Republic

35. The 1996 requirements are slightly lower than the revised 1995 requirements, due to reduced requirements under travel and general operating expenses. In addition, the repair and renovation work in the expanded office premises will have taken place in 1995. Provision has been made for the replacement of some office furniture and equipment.

UNHCR EXPENDITURE IN OTHER COUNTRIES IN WESTERN ASIA

(in thousands of United States dollars)

1994	1995		1996		
AMOUNT OBLIGATED	ALLOCATION APPROVED BY 1994 EXCOM	PROPOSED REVISED ALLOCATION		SOURCE OF FUNDS AND TYPE OF ASSISTANCE	PROPOSED ALLOCATION/ PROJECTION
GENERAL PROGRAMMES (1)					
1,086.7	1,998.8	1,940.0	Syria	CARE AND MAINTENANCE	1,944.3
42.6	17.3	17.3	Lebanon		18.9
509.5	473.6	662.6	Jordan		592.6
3.6 a/	-	-	Israel		-
0.1 a/	-	-	Kuwait		80.0
110.0	188.6	186.9	Other countries		107.3
10.0	18.5	16.0	Syria	LOCAL SETTLEMENT	22.6
3.9 a/	-	-	Jordan		-
0.8 a/	-	-	Saudi Arabia		-
220.3 b/	285.9	285.9	Lebanon		248.0
28.0	37.5	37.5	Other countries		36.4
34.2 a/	-	-	Jordan	RESETTLEMENT	-
5.9	-	-	Kuwait		-
3.8 c/	16.9	23.8	Syria		31.1
24.4 a/	-	-	Saudi Arabia		-
25.9 d/	24.3	24.3	Lebanon		38.8
7.8 e/	10.8	10.8	Other countries		8.0
57.8	299.5	210.7	Syria	VOLUNTARY REPATRIATION	210.7
19.3 f/	-	110.7 g/	Lebanon		-
-	-	-	Jordan		-
-	-	62.7 g/	Other countries		-
455.0	439.5	459.3	Jordan	PROGRAMME DELIVERY See Overview Tables (Part II)	467.4
-	-	531.5	Kuwait		537.4
238.4	324.5	374.4	Lebanon		373.3
263.7	412.6	699.8	Syria		634.1
522.8	734.4	1,319.6	Saudi Arabia		1,301.7
47.9	72.0	-	Regional Training		-
3,722.4	5,354.7	6,973.8		SUB-TOTAL OPERATIONS	6,652.6
64.0	59.2	65.8	Lebanon	ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT See Overview Tables (Part II)	65.5
38.6	18.7	34.7	Jordan		35.5
-	-	54.5	Kuwait		55.2
22.4	90.1	173.5	Saudi Arabia		171.2
21.7	128.0	42.6	Syria		37.3
183.0	139.0	-	Regional Training		-
4,062.1	5,789.7	7,344.9		TOTAL (1)	7,017.3

UNHCR EXPENDITURE IN OTHER COUNTRIES IN WESTERN ASIA

(in thousands of United States dollars)

1994			1996		
AMOUNT OBLIGATED	ALLOCATION APPROVED BY 1994 EXCOM	PROPOSED REVISED ALLOCATION		SOURCE OF FUNDS AND TYPE OF ASSISTANCE	PROPOSED ALLOCATION/ PROJECTION
SPECIAL PROGRAMMES (2)					
7.6	41.1	-	Lebanon/Syria	EDUCATION ACCOUNT	-
				OTHER TRUST FUNDS	
6.1	-	-	Lebanon	Construction of a hospital	-
				PROGRAMME DELIVERY See Overview Tables (Part II)	
602.1	1,110.2	-	Saudi Arabia		-
214.2	181.1	-	Syria		-
378.1	-	-	Kuwait		-
-	115.8	-	Other Countries		-
16.1	-	-	Regional Training		-
				ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT See Overview Tables (Part II)	
55.8	107.7	339.3	Saudi Arabia		339.3
36.9	-	19.6	Kuwait		20.8
				ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT See Overview Tables (Part II)	
59.3	80.0	63.0	Kuwait	Junior Professional Officer	63.0
45.5	63.0	-	Saudi Arabia	Junior Professional Officer	-
-	-	-	Syria	Junior Professional Officer	-
1,421.7	1,698.9	421.9		TOTAL (2)	423.1
5,473.8	7,488.6	7,766.8		GRAND TOTAL (1+2)	7,440.4

a/ obligation incurred against Other Programmes

b/ of which US\$ 7,659 incurred against Other Programmes

c/ of which US\$ 1,744 incurred against Other Programmes

d/ of which US\$ 7,742 incurred against Other Programmes

e/ of which US\$ 996 incurred against Other Programmes

f/ of which US\$ 14,075 obligated under the General Allocation for Voluntary Repatriation and

US\$ 5,211 incurred under Other Programmes

g/ allocated from the General Allocation for Voluntary Repatriation

